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quiet. I was employed reading a book, 'Charles Dashwood,' for perhaps the twentieth time, when Juan came in to say that the hunting party had returned. As it was only ten o'clock, my first idea was that the schooner had arrived with Don Luiz. However, this was dispelled by Juan, who had gone out to reconnoitre, rushing in with the news that ten Chilians had arrived on the south side with twenty-one horses. Shortly afterwards Mr. Clarke himself came in and corroborated the intelligence. These men proved to be deserters, who had escaped by night from Punta Arena, taking with them nearly all the horses in the corral. They had left on the 2nd of July, at two A.M. Four of the number were those previously recaptured in Santa Cruz, who had been kept in irons and closely confined at night; but by a supreme effort they had broken their chains, and together with the others, who had everything arranged outside the cuartel, had effected their escape. The sufferings these men must have undergone during the twenty-two days' journey over the Pampas, exposed without shelter to the fierce winds, and sometimes with the snow up to their horses' girths; must have been something frightful, and many of them were frost-bitten. It was out of the question for us to receive them, as our own supplies were failing, and in truth we congratulated ourselves on the horses being secured in the corral, and anxiously watched the movements of the new comers. The party during the afternoon succeeded in crossing the river to the north side, swimming their horses; and disappeared in the direction of the Rio Chico.

484 By this time even the kind companionship of Mr. Clarke failed to reconcile me to the tedious monotony of our life. The game also became scarcer and scarcer, and the chance of the schooner's coming appeared so indefinite, that at the beginning of August I began to think it would be better and more amusing to migrate to the Indian camp, where, at any rate, plenty of meat was procurable. Accordingly, when the Indians came over again on a visit on the 7th of August, I

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bought a horse, or rather exchanged away a revolver for one (a three year old, newly broken), and started in company with Orkeke, Campan, Cayuke, and Tankelow, four Indians, all of whom were previous acquaintances. Casimiro followed with his family, taking one of the horses from Santa Cruz to assist in the transport of his household. This horse was one I had been accustomed to ride in Santa Cruz, and on arriving at the Indian camp was lent me as a second horse. Shortly after passing the first hills on the northern side, our party not being burdened with women and children, started off at a hand canter, which was kept up until a puma suddenly sprang out of a bush, when chase was immediately given; he, however, got into a thick tangle of incense bushes, from which we tried in vain to dislodge him, and although pelted with stones he lay there spitting like a great cat. Cayuke wished to fire the bush, but Orkeke would not waste time, so we mounted and proceeded on our journey. We continued riding over plains and ridges until about four P.M., when we reached a large laguna, close to which grew some high coarse grass and shrubs; here several ostriches were started, and one killed by Orkeke. On reaching the range of hills before described as the southern barrier of the valley of the Rio Chico, we halted, and shortly had the ostrich cooking on a good fire. We looked back for Casimiro, but could not see him, so after supper and a smoke pursued our journey by the soft light of a young moon. We rode on until about nine P.M., when we reached the Indian encampment. We had been previously puzzled by seeing fires burning a considerable distance up the valley, and found that our chief, Camillo, had already marched in that direction. One of the first persons who accosted me was Arica, and I shortly discovered that all the Chilians[1] were installed with the Indians in different toldos, which was rather an unpleasant surprise. I was ushered into Orkeke's toldo with due ceremony, and we took our seats by the fire. I had brought a bag of coffee with me, so we set to work and roasted some, after which one of

[1] [i.e. escaped prisoners — Analyst]

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a huge puma couched by the extinct ashes of the fire. Just, however, as Arica was about to fire the revolver which I had lent him, the beast bounded away into the bushes. But as he was convinced that the puma was close at hand waiting for an opportunity to attack, he spent several hours on the watch with his revolver ready. His delight may be imagined when, worn out with want of food and rest, he was relieved by the arrival of the Indian with the meat and a horse for him to ride.

The next day we made a short march up the river valley, the caravan of women and horses, as usual, proceeding along the track, while the men hunted in the adjacent plains. I was fortunate enough in the hunt to kill a guanaco and an ostrich, and duly shared them with Casimiro. The order of march and method of hunting which constitute the daily routine are as follows: the Cacique, who has the ordering of the marching and hunting, comes out of his toldo at daylight, sometimes indeed before, and delivers a loud oration, describing the order of march, the appointed place of hunting, and the general programme; he then exhorts the young men to catch and bring up the horses, and be alert and active in the hunt, enforcing his admonition, by way of a wind up, with a boastful relation of his own deeds of prowess when he was young. Sometimes the women, while the chief is haranguing, rekindle or blow up the embers of the fire and prepare a slight breakfast, but not invariably. Some cold meat is also occasionally reserved from the evening meal, and placed in a hide bag to be carried with them on the march, to be given to the children when they are hungry. But the general custom for the men is to wait until the day's hunt has supplied fresh meat. When the Cacique's 'oration' —which is very little attended to—is over, the young men and boys lazo and bring up the horses, and the women place on their backs the bolster of reeds, tied with hide thongs, mantles, and coloured blankets, which form their saddles; others are strapping their belts on, or putting their babies

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into wickerwork cradles, or rolling up the skins that form the coverings of the toldos, and placing them and the poles on the baggage horses; last of all the small breakers, which are carried on the march, are filled with water. The women mount by means of a sling round the horses' necks, and sit astride of their bolster-saddles; their babies—if they possess any—and their pet dogs are hoisted up, the babies being stowed in the cradles behind them; then they take their baggage-horses in tow and start off in single file. The men, who generally wait until all are ready, then drive the spare horses for a short distance, and having handed them over to the charge of their wives or daughters, retire to a neighbouring bush, where a fire is kindled, pipes are lighted, and the hunt commenced in the following manner. Two men start off and ride at a gallop round a certain area of country, varying according to the number of the party, lighting fires at intervals to mark their track. After the lapse of a few minutes two others are despatched, and so on until only a few are left with the cacique. These spread themselves out in a crescent, closing in and narrowing the circle on a point where those first started have by this time arrived. The crescent rests on a baseline formed by the slowly-proceeding line of women, children, and baggage-horses. The ostriches and herds of guanaco run from the advancing party, but are checked by the pointsmen, and when the circle is well closed in are attacked with the bolas, two men frequently chasing the same animal from different sides. The dogs also assist in the chase, but the Indians are so quick and expert with the bolas that unless their horses are tired, or they happen to have gambled away their bolas, the dogs are not much called into use. Pumas are very frequently found in the circles, and quickly despatched by a blow on the head from a ball. On one occasion I saw Waki completely crush, by a single blow, the skull of an unusually large one. The Indian law of division of the game prevents all disputes, and is as follows. The man who balls the ostrich leaves it for

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START FROM THE CAMP AT MOWAISH OR WINDOW HILL.

[facing p. 79]

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551 heads grotesquely on either side to the beats of the drum,
535 retired for a short time to rest themselves, after which they appeared again and danced a different step. When that was over, four more appeared, and so on, until every one, including the boys, had had a fling. Sometimes, to give greater effect, the performers carried a bunch of rushes in one hand. About nine P.M., everybody having had enough, Casimiro gave the sign. The band stopped playing, and all retired to bed. The dancing was not ungraceful, but was rendered grotesque by the absurd motions of the head. It was strictly confined to the men, the women being only allowed to look on.

133 On the second day's march from the scene of my first Indian ball we crossed a rocky ridge abounding with a description of vesicular lava; the ridge ran out from the southern limits of the valley and terminated in precipitous cliffs, round the base of which wound the river. The surface of the ridge was fissured in many places with deep chasms like Alpine crevasses, on the brink of one of which my horse stopped just in time to escape a fall. The caravan had gone a more circuitous route to take advantage of the lowest and easiest crest. On the other side of the ridge the valley suddenly spread out to the extent of several miles, and on the western horizon a line of snowy peaks was visible, their summits capped with clouds: this was our first view of the Cordillera. The low ground was cut up by streams and small lakelets of water, formed by the overflow of a small fork of the river, which glistening in the afternoon sunshine presented a beautiful silvery appearance, very refreshing to the eye wearied with alternate gazing on withered
● 484 grass and black volcanic rocks. However beautiful to look at, this scene would clearly prove difficult travelling, so a halt was called, and our course debated on; ultimately it was resolved to cross the river and encamp on the northern bank, where the ground was higher and free from floods, so loads were carefully adjusted, and children transferred to the arms of the men, to give the women more freedom of action;

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baggage-horses were also taken in tow by the young men, 464
and Casimiro and another volunteering to lead the van and
act as pilots, we proceeded to make our way to the river-bank,
which rose by a gradual elevation from the lower inundated
plain. After much floundering about in water-holes, and
various spills, which caused great merriment, especially when
Mrs. Orkake and all her gear came down by the run, an iron
kettle of which she was very proud clattering down so as to
frighten several of the horses into what threatened to become
a general stampede, the bank was safely reached; the river
was swollen high, and its rapid current running six or seven
miles an hour, was bringing down huge sharp-edged masses
of ice. It seemed almost impossible for the women and
baggage animals to cross. However, Orkake, taking a long
pole to sound with, led the way, and by watching their
opportunity to dodge the floating ice, which cut the horses'
and riders' legs cruelly, all got safely over. A wilder
scene could hardly be imagined—dogs howling on the bank
fearing to pass, women singing out to their various friends
and relations, and here and there an adventurous Indian,
who scorned to go by the ford with the rest, disappearing
for a second in the river, horse and all, but ultimately
emerging some distance down the stream. The water was
bitterly cold, as may be imagined, and the piercing wind be-
numbed our dripping bodies; so on arriving at the north bank,
where there were some small sandy hillocks, we kindled a large
fire, and had a warm and a smoke whilst the women were
employed pitching the tolderia. It had been decided to remain
here some days and then proceed to the vicinity of the Cordil-
leras for the purpose of catching wild horses. But, as will be
seen shortly, 'L'homme propose et Dieu dispose.' Looking 33
up towards the Cordilleras from our encampment, the valley
appeared to expand a few miles up into one immense plain,
and the Indians informed me that before reaching the moun-
tains there is a great drop or basin where the wild horses are
found. This was probably, at the period of our visit, a vast

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civilised appearance of those Indians. We passed several very hungry and disagreeable days in Geylum previous to starting; there was little game in the surrounding country, and the weather was cold and wet, with occasional snow. For two whole days Casimiro, Meña, and myself, who were usually messmates, had nothing to eat but an armadillo and a few fish which I caught in a pool of the stream. Near the Column Rock, whilst hunting, we discovered a 'cache,' belonging to Foyel's Indians, which contained something wrapped and lashed up in hides: although the temptation was great to overhaul its contents, the package was left unopened, and a quiet warning conveyed to Foyel that others were not likely to be so scrupulous. This confirmed what Casimiro had said as to these Indians providently leaving bags of fat and provisions in various places to which they expected to return at no very distant period.

On the day fixed in the council, held subsequent to the return of the chasquis, we all started, fully equipped, on our journey to Las Manzanas, mustering 250 men of the united Indians, without toldos or baggage, and in light marching order with a few spare horses. A few horses were loaded with coverings for toldos, mantles, &c., which the women hoped to sell to advantage to the Araucanians, and a few of the women accompanied the expedition to conduct their barter, while a guard of perhaps forty men remained behind to provide food for the women and children who were to await our return.

We crossed the gradually sloping irregular plains covered with stunted bushes, but scarcely deserving the name of high pampas, which bordered the northern side of the valley of Geylum, and after passing between two parallel walls of rocks, forming a sort of natural street, we emerged into a succession of grassy plains, separated by barren rocky hills covered with scrub, on attaining the summits of which the wooded Cordillera on the western side rose into view some few leagues distant. About eleven A.M., after we had been

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western side by the rocky heights we were descending. The 133
view would have been enjoyable on a fine day, but in such a Patagonian tempest of rain and wind, landscapes were by no means appreciated. Near the lagoon was another herd of guanaco, some three thousand strong, who tempted us to a vain endeavour to encircle them, but they descried us before we could approach within a mile, and were soon lost to sight on the plains leading towards Margensho. Whilst riding down the edge of the hills Casimiro pointed out some 137
thyme, a little of which we gathered to flavour our soup with in the evening. We then descended, and sheltered under the overhanging bank of a dry watercourse leading to the lagoon. The women and remainder of the cavalcade shortly arrived, and loading my page with firewood, to his intense disgust and the extreme delight of every one else, we proceeded a little farther to the south, where the pasture was good, and established ourselves for the night.

The following morning early we all started to hunt, and 132
were more successful than on the previous day, though the wind was blowing a fearful gale from the S.W., with occasional storms of sleet. Towards the afternoon, by which time, having finished our hunting, we were snug enough under the toldo, it rained hard, and with the rain the Indians commenced to arrive, till before dusk a town of toldos occupied the borders of the hills.

Casimiro this evening sent for volunteers to go in with 134
me as messengers or chasquis to Patagones, on our arrival at Margensho, now but one march distant. But of those previously so desirous to go on, not one appeared, nor would any one Indian consent to lend his horses for so long a journey. The chieftain was sadly put out, and cursed the caciquillos all round. He then tried to dissuade me from going myself, saying that it was a great distance, that the desert or travesia was a fearful place, that I should probably lose my horses, that many people had starved, at the same time wishing me to lend my horses to some other Indian.

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He narrated how he himself had occupied twelve days in crossing it, and had been obliged to abandon a horse and the saddle and gear of his remaining steed, and with difficulty, nearly starved, on foot, and driving his almost worn-out horse before him, had made his way to a station.

At the same time a young Indian started to cross the desert, but lost his way, and, quoth the cacique impressively, 'His bones are there now.'

One statement, that the chañals or white thorns grew higher than the horses' heads and tore the unlucky riders' mantles to pieces as they forced their way through them, my own after-experience fully verified. I, however, adhered firmly to my original intention of going, as agreed to by him, and conveying with my own hand the letter I had written: and it was finally settled that Meña, Nacho, and I should, on arriving at Margensho, start on our journey as chasquis. Casimiro's real motive for dissuading me was distrust, as we had on two or three occasions disagreed, and once nearly come to blows; he was therefore afraid that I should, on arriving at Patagones, work against his interests and give him a bad character. Meña, who had taken a great fancy to me, volunteered for the purpose of keeping an eye on Nacho, who was my 'bête noire,' and not to be trusted.

These arrangements having been brought to a satisfactory conclusion, we proceeded to the toldo of a friend and assisted at the ceremony performed by the doctor of curing a sick child, more especially concerning the part of painting with red ochre, killing and eating a white mare.

On this occasion the parents formally invited the principal chiefs and their relations and friends, and the ceremony commenced as follows. All the men were either sitting or standing in a circle, in the centre of which sat the mother holding her infant in her arms. The doctor then came in, and under his direction the mother plastered the infant from head to foot with white clay, the wizard meanwhile mutter-

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took place, and the letter had to be again produced, and another postscriptum added. I then took down in my note-book the immediate requirements of Casimiro and other friends, which, according to agreement, were to be sent back by Meña and Nacho, myself remaining in the settlement until the arrival of Casimiro, when we were to proceed together to Buenos Ayres either by land, *viâ* Bahia Blanca, or by steamer.

At about eight o'clock, when the rime of the frost was just cleared off the grass, we, after bidding adieu to all friends, caught our horses and started. I took with me only my suit of clothes in a bag, and the letters. Each of the party was provided with a piece of meat from the guanaco I had slain the previous day by way of provision, and with two horses apiece we were at length *en route*, the old women chanting melodiously to keep the devil out of our way. My page affected great distress at my departure, but as he had my remaining horses to take charge of, and a legacy of a mantle I had no particular use for, having worn it almost without interruption since leaving Santa Cruz, he was, in all probability, delighted to see, as he thought, the last of me as we disappeared over the ridge.

We travelled slowly for the first half hour, and had just released our spare horses from the lazos, which hitherto had restrained them from rejoining their fellows, when we heard a shout behind us, and an Indian appeared driving a troop of horses. He was from the encampment, and being a Pampa was *en route* to join his tribe, whom he expected to meet somewhere about Valchita, five days' journey on, and from whom we were to get fresh horses wherewith to cross the travesia to the settlements. This addition to our party was unexpected, but we considered the more the merrier, and three at any rate is an awkward number to travel sociably together. Putting our horses to a hand canter, we now regularly started, leaving care behind, and looking forward to bread, coffee, and other long-untasted good things. We

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484 passed the time in talking over what we would get, how we should be received, and in smoking and singing. Our route lay along the barrancas, which changed as we proceeded in a N.E. direction, to higher rugged hills interspersed with sandy valleys covered with scrub and incense bushes.

By nightfall we had arrived at a pointed hill, under the brow of which we encamped. We had seen plenty of ostrich and guanaco, but had not delayed to hunt, only pausing to pick up an armadillo that happened to be basking in our road.

On dismounting we secured all the horses with lazos or manéos, as they might probably be inclined to stray away. After gathering a little firewood, kindling a fire, and discussing the armadillo and a small piece of meat each, we wrapped ourselves in our mantles and lay down to sleep, every now and again during the night getting up to have a look at the horses. The morning star was shining brightly above the horizon when we saddled up, and crossing the brow of the hill mounted to an adjoining pampa, where the rocky nature of the ground obliged our unshod horses to go at a foot pace. Added to this a bitter cold wind and small driving rain were not improving to the temper, until after an hour or two of difficult and slow travelling, the sun rose magnificently and dispelled the mists and drizzle, and restored our cheerfulness. We at length descended into a 484 133 ravine leading to a series of small valleys, containing here and there ponds covered with teal and other water birds. [136] We travelled at a gallop through the same description of country till five P.M., when, after passing a high barren plateau, similar to that encountered at starting, we suddenly came to an abrupt declivity, at the bottom of which, in a plain extending for about five miles, lay a large salina.

484 We descended where it was feasible, and after stopping to get a little salt, proceeded to encamp near a small spring of fresh water. About a mile to the eastward large herds of

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guanaco and several ostrich were visible in the plain, and near our halting-place we found the tracks of a puma, for which we searched diligently, but without success.

After securing our horses, as on the previous night, we dined, minus armadillo, off a piece of scraggy meat, and turned in. The salt from the salina was of excellent quality; it was necessary to remove a little of the upper surface, which had slightly deteriorated by exposure to the atmosphere, and then we cut out cakes of salt like pieces of ice, which served for plates. It is a strange fact that both into this and other salinas small rivulets of fresh water flowed, fed by springs in the neighbouring hills.

The next morning (if it could be so called) at the same hour we were in the saddle, and traversing the plain crossed some ridges of moderate height, and continued passing through a tract of country thickly wooded with incense and other bushes. About two P.M. we arrived at a rivulet of water, near which were marks of a recent encampment; after examining these, we came to the conclusion that a week had perhaps elapsed since the occupants had left. We travelled forward at our utmost speed over ground of much the same description, diversified now and again by ranges of low hills, putting up occasionally a partridge, of which birds we observed two different species, one crested, and nearly as large as a hen pheasant, and the other smaller than an English bird, and which took only short flights and then cowered—and were fortunate enough to kill a couple. The sun went down behind some hills, and still we found no suitable place to halt in; at last, however, we came to some ponds of water, where we all, being pretty well tired, dismounted, and tethering two of the horses allowed the remainder to go loose. We found the water brackish, though drinkable, but the animals would scarcely touch it, and wandered about, necessitating a watch on them all night; this was rather weary work, especially as a sharp frost came on, and with all our care, at starting-time two horses were missing. After a

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search of an hour they were found, having wandered in search of better water, and, wiser than ourselves, found out a spring about two miles to the east.

The sun was up before we got away, after warming and eating the last of our food, which we had cooked overnight it was dry and dusty, and all the washing in the world could not have got the grit out of it; however, we laughed over it, saying we would soon have a bottle of wine to wash away the dirt from our throats. One thing we congratulated ourselves on was being well provided with tobacco, and although we boasted no pipe, mine having been lost at a previous encampment, Casimiro's correspondence with Foyel and Cheoque, which I had carefully kept, provided us with cigarette papers. We rode on accordingly, rejoicing, and passing out of this wooded country traversed a succession of high pampas, set with small blocks of granite exactly resembling paving-stones, and placed as thickly and regularly as if paviors had been at work. The appearance of a London street undergoing repair brought this singular formation vividly to my mind. These pampas terminated in waterworn cliffs thickly strewn with stones, and as our horses scrambled like cats up the slopes, their hoofs sent the stones clattering down, and they found it hard to keep their footing. At the foot of the cliffs were watered valleys, and whilst descending into one of these valleys I noticed for the first time the algarroba thorn, which was in fruit. There were two sorts, one with black fruit, which Nacho warned me not to touch, as it was poisonous, the other bearing yellow pods, which though somewhat dry, as the season was so advanced, we plucked and ate as we rode along, the taste proving something between tamarinds and peach.

Near a lagoon in one of these valleys we halted for a few minutes, and on pursuing our journey espied a horseman with a troop of led horses approaching from the opposite side. I had halted for a moment and saw my companions rein up, and racing up to know the cause, observed him. When within

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200 or 300 yards, all halted; and Nacho rode forward, and 576
ceremonious explanations ensued, followed by formal introductions. He was a Pampa Indian outward bound to join those mentioned as having passed us eastward of Margensho; he gave us news that Jackechan's, Teneforo's, and other Indians were in a place called Trinita, some four hours' gallop only distant. When he found that I was 'Anglish,' he spoke in high praise of my countrymen whom he had met in Rio Negro.

This man was a perfect picture; he was splendidly mounted, and had a troop of horses all as good as the one he bestrode. He was well dressed in ponchos and white drawers, and wore a silk handkerchief round his head. Over his saddle was a poncho containing, as we supposed, a store of yerba, flour, or other luxuries, and he had a bold, careless, good-humoured face, with restless eyes; altogether he gave one an idea of the imaginary generous bandits one reads of in novels, and to make the character complete it turned out afterwards that he had almost certainly stolen the horses from Trinita.

After five minutes' conversation, we started in opposite 484
directions, and our party pressed on at speed. From the steep hill above the valley we saw, to our joy, the smoke of hunting parties apparently not far off. However, it was four o'clock when we arrived in the vicinity of the fires in a green pastured valley. From one of the two toldos pitched there, a man emerged with a matè pot in his hand and a bombilla or reed used for imbibing matè, like straws for sherry cobblers, in his mouth. As these people proved not to be the Indians we wanted, after saluting him we galloped on, and crossing the valley, where we had to jump our horses over a brook, ascended the opposite hill. A new growth of [37]
bush growing sixteen feet high, with long switches like osiers, forced itself unpleasantly on our attention, as, when riding fast, they sprang back into one's face in the most painfully annoying manner. On the hillside we overtook and passed

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464 a caravan of women travelling in the same direction as ourselves, and from the summit of the range saw in the valley below two different groups of thirty or forty toldos each, about half a mile apart. Galloping on we arrived, about 484 five P.M., at the nearest tolderia; but on inquiring for 576 Patricio, to whom we had been directed to go by Casimiro, found that he belonged to the others, to which we proceeded, and were duly received, our horses, &c., taken care of, and ourselves ushered with all ceremony into the presence of Patricio (a half-bred Pampa and Tehuelche). After the hour's etiquette of answering questions, we were each given one rib of a guanaco to eat. I was so hungry that I could have eaten a dozen at least, so, on the plea of washing, started off to look for Jackechan's toldo, which I shortly found, and was received with open arms by my friend and El Sourdo. After his 'missus' had given me some food, followed by the luxury of a maté with sugar, Jackechan related his proceedings subsequent to leaving our party.

203 After a few days' march in the direction of the Chupat, he came across some cattle, which were caught and killed, and then, whilst in the same spot, he despatched the messenger to Chupat with the letter, who returned in fifteen days with an answer, but without any stores.

The letter, carefully wrapped in a piece of old linen which had *served as the envelope to my own epistle*, was ceremoniously handed to me by the light of a blaze produced by some grease thrown upon the fire. I read and interpreted the contents to Jackechan. The writer—Mr. Hughes, if I recollect rightly—expressed his pleasure at hearing of my safety, but regretted his inability to forward any stores or clothing, as the supply in the colony was extremely scanty, owing to the non-arrival of the ship with Mr. Lewis Jones on board, which had been expected for some months. It need scarcely be said that I had been quite unaware of the privations endured by these unfortunate colonists, which the despatches of Commander Dennistoun have made known to

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Everybody at once mounted and went to escort in the new arrivals, who proved to be Teneforo himself and two of his followers. They had brought a hundred head of horses and cattle as far as Valchita, two days' journey from Trinita, and had left them there, bringing on with them only some liquor and yerba, which were at once unloaded. After I had been presented to the newly-arrived chief, who hailed me as a brother, and honoured me by a place among the four caciques, who, pannikins in hand, walked round the lances in due performance of the ceremony of blessing the liquor, already described, the drinking commenced.

When the people arrived the sun had just risen, and by ten o'clock, most of the liquor, which consisted of some gin and caña, or white rum, had disappeared. Many of the Indians were intoxicated, but all after a merry, good-tempered fashion, which it had never been my luck to see before. After imbibing freely enough with my numerous friends—who, if it had been left to them, would have made me as drunk as themselves—I mounted my horse, and after a bathe amongst the tall reeds on the borders of the stream, returned to the toldo, where I found the aged Patricio singing to himself in a very maudlin state. By sundown all were sober again, and Patricio imparted to me that he intended himself to proceed with us, as well as some other friends, his wife, and two or three other women, but that we were to travel by the lower route, which, though longer, was easier and safer than the shorter and upper road, where the thorns grew higher and thicker: the latter is usually selected in summer, when water is scarce, of which at this season there was no danger.

The following morning, bidding adieu to Antonio, Champayo, and Jackechan—whose ration I had promised to procure—we started, eleven men and four women, taking plenty of horses, besides a troop of mares for an Indian called Hernandez, settled near the Guardia Chica, the mares being intended for the purpose of treading out his crop of corn.

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484 We were soon out of sight of the encampment at Trinita, and proceeding at either a gallop or a trot through an undulating country, in which incense, algarroba, and other shrubs abounded, arrived near sunset at a stream, on the north side of which we encamped, amongst some thick bushes. A little distance to the west lay a large salina, from which, several miles across, the place takes its name, being called Hitchin-kaik, or Salt Hill. The stream flows round one side of the salina, and is, I think, the same that we subsequently crossed near Valchita. This time we travelled in great style, the women having brought with them stores of horse-meat and yerba.

263 After dinner we all sat round the fire and took a maté, and some of an Indian sweetmeat, a yellow paste made from the algarroba bean pounded and mixed with water. Old
000 Patricio, who had turned over a new leaf, and grown quite frisky after the drink, said that I was a fortunate man, having a wife with me; alluding to one of the wives of the cacique El Ingles, who was travelling with us to rejoin her husband near Patagones.

484 The following morning at daylight we again started, and
137 travelling over much the same description of country as on the previous day, arrived about midday at the place where Teneforo had left his cattle. Here we dismounted and *refreshed ourselves off the round berries about the size of a* turnip-radish, the fruit of a small plant growing by the margin of the water, which had a very pleasant taste. The river here had a fringe of tussocks of pampa grass, under which we reclined and smoked.

484 The cattle were grouped about amongst these tussocks,
133 and Golwin, Jackeeban's son with the light hair, amused himself by vain attempts to count them. After half an hour's dawdling we proceeded, leaving behind one of Meña's horses which was done up, and, following more or less the line of the river, we arrived, about three P.M., at the encampment of Valchita. As it was early in the day, some of the party

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started to hunt, but returned empty-handed. We filled up 434 ●
the skins and water-bottles, in anticipation of entering the 133
travesia the following day; and, after the usual meal and
maté, sought out each his own particular nest in the pampa
grass, and went to sleep without fear of the horses straying
far, the pasture and water being both of the best quality.
As it was in this encampment that, according to Casimiro,
the defunct Mendoza had discovered gold, I prospected care-
fully for any signs, but only noticed that parts of the
adjoining pampa were strewn, amongst other pebbles, with
pieces of quartz. At the usual hour we started to commence
the ascent to the travesia, or desert, which rose above us
to the north, in a high plateau. On ascending a short
distance, we observed on our left hand (to the westward) a [135]
salina of several leagues in length, which bordered the edge
of the travesia in about an east or west direction. I am
inclined to think that the river Vakhita loses itself in this
salina. This river is subject to great floods, evidences of
which were visible in the drift weeds and rubbish clinging
to the bushes and shrubs throughout the valley, evidently
left there by the spring inundation. By a gradual ascent
we at length reached the level of the plateau, and saw before
us an interminable dreary expanse strewn with small shingle,
and covered with shrubs varying from four to twelve feet, or
even higher, and here and there small tufts of grass. No
signs of life were visible. The sky was bright and clear,
although clouds were gathering in the southern horizon,
and the wind (it nearly always blows in Patagonia) was
cutting. I remarked to Luis Aguirre that it would possibly 521
rain; his reply, 'I hope it will—it will be splendid, then all
the lagoons will be full,' told of the danger of drought, but
found no assent from me, having had enough of wet weather
during the excursion to Las Manzanas. During the ride he
told me that he knew the difference between the Catholic
and Protestant religions, and of the two he preferred the
latter; he also asked me if I had ever been to China, where

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52| the tea came from, and various other questions evincing a considerable amount of information; and wound up by proposing that I should set up a trading establishment near the Chupat; Jackechan—who, if any one can claim it, is the real lord of the soil—having volunteered to cede the ground to me. In the event of establishing a store in that neighbourhood, this astute Indian considered that all the Indian trade would be taken out of the hands of the people of Patagones, who notoriously used false weights, besides charging exorbitantly for all articles supplied to the Indians.

484 About two P.M., as the rough shingle had already begun
133 to tell on our horses' feet, a halting-place was found near a laguna containing rain-water of the colour of *café au lait*. The horses were for the present let loose, to pick up the best meal they could off the stunted grass near the borders of the lagoon. Before dark most of them were tethered, and a careful watch kept all night, lest they should return to Valchita in search of pasture and water. After a lengthened conversation by the fireside—in which I was informed that the track we were travelling was called Pigs' Road, from
[136] wild pigs, or perhaps peccaries, having been killed near one of the lagoons in the route—we wrapped ourselves in our manties and sheltered ourselves like hedgehogs under the bushes, from time to time getting up to look round for the horses. Next day we rode over the same interminable
137 desert of stones, and bushes of the following descriptions: chañal or whitethorn; picayun, furnishing the best firewood; the osier-like switches before described; black bush, which is useless for burning, owing to the pestiferous smell it emits; algarroba, incense, which are, however, very scarce; and some others whose names I was unable to procure. The chañal is the only one that impedes the traveller's progress, as the thorns are large and sharp. In the other road (more to the west), which we had avoided, although the distance is shorter across the travesia, and therefore more used by the Tehuelches, who dread this crossing, especially in summer

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or for small parties, the chañal grows to the height of ten 137
to fifteen feet, and, like the 'waitabit' thorns in Albania, renders fast riding impossible.

This day we were about to start hunting, when a demi- 425
john of rum was discovered in a bush. This put an end to the sport, for, although it was hidden again in another place, enough was taken out to render most of the party talkative, a bottle or two also being reserved for discussion at the camp fire.

At four P.M. we encamped by the side of a lagoon similar 484
to the previous one, and, our Valchita water being finished, diluted the rum with meal and water about the consistency of Spanish chocolate. I forgot to state that in the excitement of the 'find' the horses were not looked after, and on mustering to proceed, one of Nacho's had disappeared, and, although carefully searched for, he was not found again.

The next day, despite the dissipations over night, we 136
were in the saddle at daybreak, and had hardly traversed a 484
league of this wearisome waste when we came suddenly upon seven wild horses. An effort made to surround them failed, owing to the difficult nature of the ground; but the failure was to me fully made up by the magnificent spectacle of these splendid creatures careering in their untamed strength and beauty across the plain.

We subsequently hunted and killed guanaco and ostrich, 133
and also saw some hares and partridges. At about ten A.M. 484
our eyes were gladdened by the sight of the sea, and presently the level plain rose into more undulating country, and from the crests of the elevations at times a full view of the inlet called the Laco de San Antonio presented itself.

Smoke was visible ahead, and we accordingly pushed on, and made a long and rapid march, the surface being here altogether free from the small stones which had previously caused so much damage to the horses' feet. That night we halted, as usual, by the side of a lagoon, the water of which was not more than two inches deep.

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the river. A large troop of horses can scarcely find pasture, 133
and after the rapid journey would not be in a condition for their riders to attack with success, if opposed vigorously by people able to defend themselves.

This district, [4/A] appeared to form a distinct and well-defined 136
limit between the habitats of various animals; as, for instance, the Rhea Darwinii, or smaller ostrich of Patagonia, and the Rhea Americana. The latter, according to my experience, is never found to the south of it, and I am at a loss to understand how Mr. Cunningham could have met with any specimens of it, as he seems to imply.*

The Tehuelches often described the larger Rhea as found north of the travesia, and as distinct from that hunted in their country. They also particularly insisted on the fact that the Gama, or deer—abundant in the Rio Negro valley and the country north of it—is never met with south of the travesia. The same remark is true of the Viscacha and the Aguarra (Lupus manatus), though the latter is probably to be met with in the spurs of the Cordillera.

Patagonia may thus be properly considered as cut off by the Rio Negro and the line of the Cordillera, and possessing its own races and a separate Fauna and Flora.

It may be added that only one species of armadillo, the Quirquincho (Dasypus minutus, Gay), occurs within these limits. The algarroba and other bushes, though found in 137
and near the borders of the travesia, do not occur south of its immediate vicinity.

It was a joyful hour for all when, on the fourth day, after 4/4 ●
galloping from dawn till ten o'clock, we at length came in sight of the valley, still three miles distant, where large [27]
willows—which, by the way, are unknown in Patagonia, save a few at Chupat, probably introduced by the settlers—marked the winding course of the Rio Negro. We halted at the head of an abra, or lateral opening which ran up [28]
into the barranca from the main valley, and saw in the

* 'Natural History of the Straits of Magellan,' p. 134.

4/A [i.e. the travesia, or desert — Ed.]

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484 distance a solitary rancho, the first civilised dwelling beheld since my departure from Santa Cruz.

After a rest, to enable all to come up, some having lagged behind perforce, their horses being hardly able to limp along, we made our way down the slope, and at length reached the river, in which our thirsty steeds soon drank their fill.

The rancho, which belonged to Hernandez, for whom the convoy of mares was intended, was then visited. The owner was absent, but his Indian wife did the honours, at least as far as serving us with maté, for no food was produced, though all were dreadfully hungry. I wished to stop and don what an American would call my citizen's clothes, thinking that we should immediately proceed to the Guardia I had heard so much of from Luis Aguirre; but he told me not to be in a hurry, so in my dirty mantle I remained for the present.

After half an hour's delay we left the rancho and followed the south bank of the river, which here was a swift stream 200 yards wide, passing the farm of Hernandez, where a man was occupied in ploughing, and mares and cattle were grazing.
[33] The river here made a bend towards the southern barrancas, which so nearly abutted on it as to compel us to ride close along the bank. Small partridges got up frequently, and I made a mental resolution to come and have a day's shooting
[34] at a future period in the magnificent willows bordering the river; blue pigeons were cooing in the trees; and through an opening we caught a glimpse, on the opposite bank, of a well-built, comfortable-looking estancia in the foreground of a wide extent of rich flat land, with corral, galpones, and the usual surroundings, which Luis Aguirre informed me belonged to Mr. Kincaid. The feeling of having safely emerged from the desert into the settlements put us, though
484 very hungry, into the best of spirits; and after a cheerful
153 half-hour's ride, passing on our road a tumbledown, unused rancho, we arrived at Sauce Blanco, or 'White Willow;'

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there the river, sweeping to the northern side, leaves a wide 484 ●
rincon, or expanse of rich alluvial ground. This is con- 133
sidered as belonging to the Indians, some of whom are always
to be found encamped near the rancho, which belonged to
the cacique El Inglés, and three toldos were pitched in its
vicinity.

We presented to the chief his wife, whom we had brought 574
with us, and I was warmly welcomed as a relative, the
cacique being a nephew of Quintabual. This chief derives
his name from his alleged relationship to some one or other
of the officers of Fitzroy's surveying expedition, so that I
was doubly welcome in my English and Indian character.
Here we camped amongst the pajas, or pampa grass, and, 252
having been presented with a mare and some pumpkins, soon
had a good fire blazing and meat and pumpkins cooking:
these latter being dressed by cutting them in halves, taking
out the seeds, and filling the interior with hot ashes, and
then placing them on the ashes, the result being, at all
events as it seemed then to my taste, delicious. I wished 484
to proceed direct to the Guardia, but as Patricio and the
others put it off till the morrow, in my ignorance of the road
and usages of the place, I was forced to 'do at Rome as
Romans does.'

A good wash in the river was one of the first things
indulged in, and the enjoyment of getting rid of several
days' accumulation of the dust and mud of the travesia can
be better imagined than described.

The following morning, before daylight, we all bathed in
the river, and, after taking mate with the cacique El Inglés,
and a warm by the fireside after sleeping in the frosty night
air, we prepared to visit the Guardia. Casting off the Indian
mantle, I assumed the usual dress of an Englishman of the
period, shooting-coat, &c.; and having been provided with
fresh horses by our friend, half an hour's gallop brought us to
the north bank, opposite the Guardia—not, however, without
misadventure, for as we made our way along the narrow,

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uneven horse-path, full of ruts, and hemmed in by pampa grass, Luiz Aguirre's horse stumbled and threw him, rolling over him and crushing his revolver into his ribs.

The mean appearance of the much-talked-of Guardia at once dispelled the ideas of it derived from the imaginative descriptions of the Indians, but some previous experience of Spanish frontier towns saved me from disappointment. The settlement consists of a small fort mounted with one gun, a cuartel or barracks, and a few houses, one or two built of brick and the others of adobe, clustering round the fort. Almost, if not quite all, of these are 'pulperias,' or grog-shops and stores, intended for trade with the Indians, for whose transport a launch is kept. The usual object first seen in frontier towns—an unfinished church—is here conspicuous by its absence, no provision for spiritual wants being made in the Guardia. After about half an hour's delay on the bank, a bustle on the other side was observed, caused by getting ready a large launch, which shortly crossed to our side; and having secured our horses with lazos and maneos, we jumped in, and I was greeted by a non-commissioned officer, who congratulated me on my arrival, stating that the Commandante, Señor Murga, had been expecting me for some months. We crossed over in great pomp, a soldier playing the cornet in the bows of the boat; and, landing, we proceeded to a store kept by a man named Don Fermin, where we were all ushered into a room behind the shop, and the Indians exposed their skins and plumes for trade. My friend the non-commissioned officer had left me, as I declined to surrender my letters to any one but the Commandante in person, and he was at the time at Patagones, distant eighteen leagues from this Guardia. Meanwhile I watched the trade going on between Don Fermin and the Indians.

Now and again people came and contemplated us, as if we were some strange sort of wild animals; but as I was out of the trading, no one bid the stranger welcome, and I formed a bad idea of the politeness of the inhabitants, though per-

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haps my shaggy hair and dress, not altogether of the neatest, may have been against me.

The Indians were soon in full enjoyment of some grog and biscuits, which they naturally asked me to share. After a bite and a sup, finding the proceedings slow, I left the room, and shortly after met Mr. Alexander Fraser and Mr. Grenfell, the owners of an estancia a few miles lower down the river; and after introducing myself, was most kindly received, and supplied with cash, a civilised medium of which I had not a sou to enable me to gratify the desire of treating my Indian friends to a bottle or two of wine and spirits and a few loaves of bread.

Mr. Fraser hospitably pressed me to come on to his establishment at once, but being desirous of handing the letters to the Commandante without delay, I returned across the river with the Indians.

A foretaste of Rio Negro manners was given us at the other side, as one of the horses, saddle, lazo and all, was missing—stolen by some of the civilised inhabitants. The horse belonged to El Ingles, and had been lent to Molia to go down from the encampment to the Guardia; the lazo belonged to me.

At the camp most of the people got more or less drunk, and Nacho received a richly-deserved thrashing for being pugnacious, after which he was lashed down, and left to cool in the frost for an hour.

In the morning I started for Patagones, accompanied by El Ingles and another Indian; but as our horses proved to be too tired to proceed into Patagones, we stopped for the night in a toldo at San Xaviel, the head-quarters of Linares and his tame Indians.

I took up my quarters at the toldo of one Chalcupe, and after supper, being desirous of communicating the political arrangements to the chief, proceeded on horseback behind another horseman, who proved to be a brother of Ronque Pinto, to the chief's residence, a long, low house.

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holding on better than the others, and I hoped she would ride out the gale in safety.

I made my captors understand the reason why no boat had come, as promised; with which they appeared to be satisfied, and we returned as we came. By means of their broken Spanish, which they had picked up from sailors, and in visits to the Chilian or other Spanish American settlements, and by signs, amounting at times pretty nearly to a pantomime, I found myself able to understand inquiries or commands, and to make known my wishes.

Early on the following morning we again visited the shore, and I looked eagerly toward the anchorage, where all my hopes of deliverance centred. Not a vessel was in sight! Whether they had foundered, or were driven upon the shoal and wrecked, or had dragged out to sea in a disabled condition, — or whether my shipmates, the gale having subsided, had deliberately proceeded on their voyage, and left me a prey to cruel savages and all the ills of this inhospitable shore, — I was unable to conjecture. I only knew that they were gone, and that I was left alone to the tender mercies of the Patagonians. No present means of escape appeared. The future, wisely hidden from my view, suggested none to my imagination. I told my captors the worst; that the high winds had probably sunk the ships, and all that were in them. At this intelligence they seemed delighted, and laughed immoderately, as if such a calamity were a consolation for the loss of their expected ransom. Their cruel glee could add nothing to the weight of my desolation. My past life was sealed up as if by an entrance on a new state

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old chief and another of my tormentors! So the scheme came to nothing; but after others more feasible had so dolefully miscarried, it was not in human nature to lay this disappointment very deeply to heart. I made as though I was glad to see the old fellow, though, could I then have had my will of the savages, they would have been safely anchored in the middle of the straits. I told him (Heaven forgive me!) I was looking for them. The chief responded to my greeting only by ordering me to mount his horse. I requested leave to stay a little longer, and was refused. I again requested to be taken to Port Famine;—no, I should be taken to "Holland."

I mounted behind him, and we travelled all day in the direction of Cape Virgin. For two days and nights I had eaten nothing, and drunk nothing but sea-water, and, in fact, had taken very little food for three days. We arrived about dark at an eminence commanding a view of their new squatting ground. Here we halted to take a short survey of the encampment. To them, doubtless, the prospect was beautiful; to me it was heart-sickening, but I strove to keep up cheerful appearances. Down in a valley or deep marshy hollow, covered with tall grass or rushes, an almost innumerable drove of horses were seen grazing; and beyond, at a short distance, the surface was thickly dotted with huts, erected, or in process of erection, by female architects. Children, in swarms like summer flies, and with no more artificial covering than these insects, were capering and shouting in high glee. At length we descended to the rude village; after tacking about, first to the right and then to the left, like a ship against a head wind, we came gallantly into town, and drew up at the

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had been. He succeeded in effecting his escape the next day; but Douglass and Simms were carried off, murdered, and, it is supposed, — I believe with good reason, — that their bodies were eaten. The Avon, after being plundered, fell into the hands of the remainder of the crew, and sailed for Montevideo.

I travelled with this ruffian about ten days. He was a hard master, though I cannot charge him with personal ill-treatment that amounted to cruelty. Our life was monotonous enough. We slept a good share of the time when we rested, drank pure water when we could get it, and ate what fell in our way; though the reader may be assured that we saw some hungry days. At the expiration of ten days, the tribe was reunited at a place agreed upon. Here we continued several days, the natives occupied exclusively with gambling, which was alike their daily labor and recreation. When the demands of hunger became too imperative to be longer postponed, they would go out and hunt, after which they resumed their game.

Gambling is a vice to which they are greatly addicted, and they pursue it with a perseverance and ardor worthy of amateurs in more civilized communities. The implements used are bits of guanaco-skin, about the size of common playing-cards, on which are rudely depicted dogs and a variety of other beasts, with divers mystic marks and scrawls, done with a stick in a pigment composed of clay, blood and grease. Unlike their compeers in more enlightened circles, they put down stakes on only one side, for which the opposite players contend. In this way they rid themselves of their saddles, bridles, knives, and what ever other portable articles they may have to hazard

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have occasional reminders of it to this day. No time was to be lost; and, with considerable effort, and no little pain, I succeeded in remounting. The swelling of my foot soon made my borrowed boots extremely uncomfortable, and I wished myself safely back at the lodge; but, at whatever expense of suffering, I had no resource but to follow the hunters till such time as they should see fit to return. The remembrance of that day's torment will not soon be lost. We arrived at the camp late in the evening; and, having been unsuccessful in the chase, went supperless to bed. On crawling into the hut and removing my boots, a sad sight was disclosed; but there was no present remedy. Dragging myself wearily into my corner, I had just crouched upon the skin, which had served for a saddle during the day and was still reeking from the horse's back, when a great dog came along, and threw his whole weight upon the lame foot, causing me to scream aloud for the pain. I drew back the serviceable foot, and gave him a kick that sent him through the fire and against the front of the lodge. Sleep kept at a distance till near morning, when I gained a brief oblivion of suffering.

Day at last dawned, and with the morning's light came the busy note of preparation for removal. Down came the tents; the squaws packing up the furniture, and the Indians chasing and lassoing their horses. The noise and confusion, disagreeable enough under any circumstances, made the scene no inapt representative of chaos, from which I was glad to be delivered on the most expeditious terms possible; and I was easily persuaded to try my fortune again in the chase, more especially as we had nothing for breakfast. No words can do more than partial

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484 justice to one of these moving scenes. Not only the skin roofs of their wigwams, but the stakes and poles which constitute the frames, are carried along with them. Their furniture gives them little trouble, seldom consisting of more than the skins on which they sleep, an ox-horn tinder-box, a few sticks for roasting meat, and a leathern water-bucket. Tents and furniture are all packed together on
854 their horses' backs. The pappooses in travelling are lashed
484 to a kind of wooden sledge, rounded at the ends like sleigh-runners, and crossed with narrow slats, that bind the parts strongly together. The little brats are bound upon these machines, which are so shaped that their heads and feet are much below the general level of their bodies,—a very uncomfortable position for the youngsters, if they have as much sensibility to pain as other children, of which I incline to doubt, as they are inured from birth to almost every species of hardship. The sledge, with its living burden, is thrown across the horse's back, and made fast to the load. The mother mounts to the top of the pack, resting her feet on the horse's neck, and armed with a cudgel, with which she vigorously belabors the beast, right and left. The pappooses, not liking the quarters assigned to them, set up a general squalling. Mothers and maiden aunts join in full chorus, drawling out, at the top of their voices, "Hŏrī! mutty, mutty! Hŏrī! mutty, mutty!" without the least change, to the thousandth repetition.
484 All these arrangements are made with remarkable celerity —in thirty minutes not a tent is left standing, but the whole tribe, their tenements and chattels, wives and brats, are all packed upon horses, and the motley cavalcade moves off like an army of beggars on horseback.

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On the present occasion the movement was delayed, while we rode in search of something to eat. The chase was unsuccessful, scarcely enough being obtained to more than sharpen our appetites for dinner. The scanty meal being over, the whole company began their journey, which in its tortuous windings was not unlike that of the Israelites in the wilderness, but unlike that in the respect that we seemed to have no particular destination or object, except to explore new hunting-grounds, and gratify the capricious restlessness of the Indians. One very desirable end was answered, — we got enough to eat, as we were successful in killing a large quantity of game. The Indians it was noticeable, were never at a loss to find their camps. So familiar did they seem with all their haunts and the general shape of the country, that though the surface presented to my eye scarcely any distinguishable way-marks, they would strike off from any point, however distant, and go with unerring aim straight to their tents. In returning laden with booty to our new homes, I was surprised to observe no indications whatever of water in the vicinity, a singular departure, at first sight, from their invariable custom, so far as I had noticed. Very soon the squaws issued from their huts, each with her leathern bucket. Curiosity prompted me to follow them a little way, when a spring was discovered, from which they had to dip the water with their ox-horn cups till the buckets were filled.

About this time a new phase of life presented itself, to cast light on an important item of the social economy established in Patagonia. Looking out of our wigwam one evening just at dusk, I noticed an unusual concourse of Indians about two hundred yards distant. There were

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492 the matter, put spurs to his horse, and told me to come on —"Bueno caballo, se campo, campo." I tried to comply, but it was hard starting the beast, though I used up considerable wood to that end. The chief having got far in advance, and finding me desperately in arrears, hove to, and waited for me. I toiled on, and succeeded in working a passage to his position. He dismounted, inspected the horse's feet, and, directing me to wait his return, rode off. He soon reappeared with a piece of guanaco-skin, which he tied securely about the hoof of the lame foot. I expressed some surprise at this method of shoeing horses; but he said, "Buenos zapatos,"— good shoes,— and the event confirmed his words. The lameness nearly disappeared, and we jogged on together without any further trouble.

583 578 While at this camping-ground, the chief one morning arose in a towering passion at some words let fall by one of his wives, and exhibited another sample of the rigor of matrimonial discipline, very similar to that which graced the nuptials of his daughter. He gave her a tremendous beating, which seemed enough to kill her outright; but she took it very calmly, as a sort of necessary evil incident to the married state.

484 Once more on the move, the squaws taking charge of the furniture and baggage, including the pappooses, and the men riding in advance as usual, to chase supplies for the larder. Game was scarce; we got a couple of ostriches and a skunk, — or a couple of skunks and an ostrich, I forget which, and it makes less difference to the reader than at the time it did to me. We cooked and lunched on the ground and turned our faces homeward with the scanty remainder. The women were busy erecting the wigwams. The ground

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was frozen, and a large iron bolt, doubtless from some wreck, served as a crowbar to dig holes for the stakes. The encampment was on a hill-side, near a low swamp, which furnished abundance of water, such as it was.

We had scarcely settled down, and I was dreading the stagnant monotony of camp life, when dulness was dispelled in a most unwelcome manner. Knots of Indians could be seen in murmuring conversation, whose glances betrayed the bent of their passions. They were again getting impatient of my life, and caresses and flattery were of no avail to stem the rising tide. On the evening of the third day, I was summoned out of the lodge by the chief, and followed him in silence, with a trembling presentiment of evil. He led me to a spot where twenty or thirty leading spirits in the tribe sat ranged in a circle, — the fatal ring was once more set to ensnare me! Once I had escaped. Was it possible to effect a second escape? Everything said no. The chances seemed a hundred to one against it. What had I left unsaid, to tempt their cupidity, to excite alarm, to make them value my safety or dread the effects of harming me? I could think of nothing, and the dismal prospect benumbed every faculty of my soul. But, as I entered the ominous circle, an access of fresh strength, the courage of desperation, enabled me to bear up with energy against perplexity and fear; to resolve that I would meet them with a steadfast eye and an inflexible mind, — a force which, though springing out of weakness, should prove stronger than their utmost malice.

Having seated myself near the chief, the consultation began and proceeded much as before, but with increased vehemence. Their demonstrations were alarming, but, to

5: Bourne T-5 (1849)1874
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stern, severe tension of all my mental energies, and a concentration of them into one focus of resolve, I waved a farewell which I hoped might be everlasting, to the accursed gang of robbers who had tormented me so many tedious weeks. "Good-by to Patagonia!" I mentally ejaculated, and struck off with my escort; but had not gone more than an eighth of a mile, when the party wheeled about and ordered me to follow them back to the camp! I remonstrated, but it was of no use, and with a heavy heart I found myself once more in my dirty corner of a wigwam. The horses were turned adrift without a word of explanation, and the Indians sat down to a game of cards, with as much indifference to everything else as if the events of the past forty-eight hours had been a feverish dream. What could be the meaning of it? I questioned the chief. He merely replied that he would go by and by, — by and by; which, being interpreted, probably meant when he pleased, and that convenient season might never arrive! After I had teased him for a long time he took me to the door of the lodge, and, pointing to the river, said it was "no good then;" it would be "good" at night. What the state of the river, which was a shallow stream, a branch of the Santa Cruz, had to do with the matter, I could not divine, and was half inclined to vote myself fairly outwitted by the Old Boy.

The day, a long one, at last wore off, and at night we once more set off. We crossed the frozen marsh, and forded the river, and, after going about two miles, stopped for repose. We took no camp equipage, and had to shelter ourselves for the night under the lee of a clump of bushes. We thrust our feet into the thicket, while our heads lodged out of doors. In this interesting attitude I was made to repeat

/33 entirely and could find no pass, it being impossible even for the animals to cross over to the other side, all passages being closed off by snow most of which has frozen solid and is, as it were, petrified. This find- [191] ing made plausible the assertion which the Indians make to the effect that they have never crossed the mountains here or in any of the other places already named. From the first of the three lakes mentioned there flows a small river which runs into the haven of Santa Cruz; from the second, located to the south of the first, springs the stream which the Indians call Chalia, which flows into the Río Grande de Santa Cruz; the last and southernmost of the three lakes gives birth to the Río Grande de Santa Cruz, which flows into the haven of the same name, situated at 632 50° 12′ of southern latitude. The chief who lives in this district, which comprises the land between Puerto Deseado and the Río de Santa Cruz [sic], is called Camelo, and we called him Julian. He is one of the chiefs with the largest following in his nation; his lieutenant is a son-in-law of his called Ceco, and he lives in the vicinity of the Santa Cruz lakes.

133 Fifteen leagues from the Santa Cruz river there is another stream, fed by the mountain snows, which runs in that area and turns toward the Straits of Magellan. This stream flows into the cove named Gallegos and is not navigable, reports of other ancient travelers to the contrary. At 52° of southern latitude is the Cabo de las Vírgenes, and the Straits of Magellan start there. The mountains come down so close to the very Straits, at its mid point, that even here it is impossible to reach [87] the 312 other side by land. There are here a number of small snow-fed streams, 715 an abundance of firewood and good grasslands which support the infinite 730 number of guanacos that live in the region. The Indian chief who governs 737 these lands is called Coopan. He is one of those having the largest fol- [220] lowing, but all his people travel on foot, the tents and small belongings 962 being transported by dogs. Only the chief and his women have horses, 1147 which are supplied to them by their neighbor Camelo, chief of San Julian. 727 This state of affairs has existed for some years, in fact since Camelo invaded this territory and took away all the horses. Since the invasion it has been his policy to supply chief Coopan and his wives with horses, but no one else, and in this way he is able to keep his southern neighbors 229 under his control. Horseless, they hunt guanacos on foot, and as there 134 are many of these animals they are able to live pretty well in this territory. In Puerto Deseado and in San Julian a good many of these animals also live, yet not so many, and there the Indians can hunt them with greater ease since they have horses; but then again, the Indians here in the more 136 southern part who lack horses are themselves more agile and robust. In

4/62 woman be sick, for she must somehow find the strength to do all this.
[342 281] In addition to these things she must sew the tent together, it being made always of the skins of full grown guanacos, and all the other skins which go to make bedding and clothing, these usually being made of hare, skunk or newly born or unborn guanacos. These small guanacos are collected and skinned in the springtime, and those in excess of the local need are bartered with the Indians of Rio Negro for horses, clothing, beaded halters and knives, which the latter acquire by trading or on their
4/38 periodic invasions of the Buenos Aires frontier. The fact is that the Indians whom we are here describing have never had dealings with Spaniards until the present date, nor have they seen any Spanish towns, nor do these regions contain iron, metal, brass, tools or arms - all these things must be acquired by the above mentioned trading. The women, in order to
[281 283] sew the skins together use awls which they make from the iron the Rio Negro Indians give them, and instead of thread they use nerves which they collect, as needed, from the legs of ostriches.

6/22 The chieftainship is hereditary and his authority absolute in regard to shifting the camp site in search of the game upon which they live.
● 4/84 203 When the chief thinks that it is time to move he shouts out a speech in a loud voice from his tent the evening before the move is to be made. All the others listen to him with great attention, each from his own tent. He tells them that a move must be made on the following day, he assigns a time for rounding up [?1] the horses, for striking the tents and for starting out; no one answers him, and at the assigned hour all are ready
4/84 as he has ordered. The women travel along paths which lead to the watering places where they are to stay; they are responsible for all the
229 baggage. The men, after the women have got under way, spread out and take their places in the surrounding region in order to enclose the guanacos and entangle them with the bolas as they attempt to break away. The guanacos cannot be chased, for they dash away headlong at such speed that no horse or dog can catch them. Once brought down by the bolas the dogs assist the Indians to finish them off. The chief himself assigns the position each Indian must take for the guanaco hunt, for which
[122] in testimony of his overlordship, he is given part of the catch. The chief never takes active part in the hunt and does nothing other than go from stand to stand. The longest day's journeys are of four leagues. On ar-
4/87 riving at the assigned camping place the women put up the tents, collect firewood and have everything ready for the coming of the men. The
[213 4/62] latter, when the sun sets, go to their tents, and never have I seen any of them arrive at their tents after nightfall. If the march is to be continued on the following day the chief harangues his people in the same manner

as before, but if he says nothing, then all know that for the while they are to remain in that place. Their camp site is usually in the area to which they know that the game has moved. When the chief sees that meat is running low he gives orders at sundown, in the same manner as when ordering a move to a new camp site, that the horses are to be brought in at some specified time on the following day. Once this has been done he harangues them once more, this time on horseback, and assigns the hunting stations and all else which each group of hunters is to do. Some women go with them to load the game, the men being unwilling to do even this chore. The tents are left standing and in them the remaining women, children, and disabled Indians wait. At sundown they return to their tents once more. The chief's authority is limited to these few activities only, and he never for any crime punishes his people, although in the aforementioned manner in which obedience is required it is never found that they do not fulfill his orders faithfully. When he wants to wage war on his neighbors, or on some other group which may have insulted their honor, this can only be carried into effect with the approval of his chief subordinates, to which effect they meet together in the chief's tent. The latter recalls over and explains the wrongs which have been done, the way in which they can be avenged, forces, ease and difficulties entailed in the waging of the war. The members of the council confer about the matter and either approve or reject the proposal of the chief, who does not take offense if he is overruled. Usually the chief's bid for war is approved and the council merely discusses ways and means of waging it, and the time of its commencing. This discussion often lasts some days. Once they are agreed on the matter of beginning hostilities the chief, on three successive nights, shouts the news in a loud voice from his tent so as to inform his people of the declaration of war, the time which has been set for its [?] commencement, the manner in which it is to be conducted, who are the enemies, the cause of the war, and they are warned to be wary and prepared.

One of the principle causes for the declaration of war is the following. Each chief's territory has fixed boundaries, and no Indian may cross into the territory of a neighbor without obtaining permission from the latter to do so. The Indian who wishes to obtain such permission must make three smoke signals, and until he is answered by three other smoke signals he may not approach the encampment. Once he has been answered he must give an account of himself to the chief in whose territory he is, telling his reasons for coming, be it only because he is passing through or because he wishes to take up residence there. If the chief so

desires he gives his permission, and if not, he orders him to leave his territory and dominions immediately. If the Indian is going as ambassador for his own chief or for some other group of Indians, either to ask permission to pass through the territory or to trade or to pay a call, he is told by the chief the time, the place of entry, the road to be followed in order to continue on their way or the land they are to occupy in order to do their trading. After all of this, the three smoke signals must be made again and once these are answered by the Indians whose territory they wish to enter, they all come; at about one league from the encampment the men come to a halt, the women go forward with the children, put up their tents in the spot which has been assigned to them and, all being in readiness, the men go forward and join the women. No one comes out to receive the newcomers, each group being in sight of the others for quite a long period until the chief or some other of the visitors goes to pay his respects to the host chief, who receives him in his tent in company of his principal lieutenants all of whom gather to welcome the stranger. This call often lasts a whole day since, as each speaks without being interrupted by anyone else, if the visitor brings much news and wishes also to learn all about the things of note in the territory, the speech of each individual present is liable to last two or three hours and even more as they also repeat certain words and phrases many times over. He who is listening, together with all who surround him, pays strict attention to what is said, saying with some frequency "ε," "ε," which means yes, yes, and with no other word do they interrupt the speaker. At these meetings alliances are made, general feelings of friendliness are exchanged and other contracts, pacts and agreements are concluded, in all of which the chiefs have absolute authority. When the formalities here described are not observed prior to entering the territory or camp of some other group, then the action is considered a sign of bad faith and a general alarm is sounded.

They also declare war on each other often for horse stealing, and as a result the vanquished are deprived of their horses, the young women and children are made captives and the old women together with the ablebodied men are given no quarter, unless they save themselves by escaping from their pursuers. [73]

The chief is under the obligation of protecting and aiding the Indians in his territory when they are in need, and so that chief is most popular and esteemed by his people who best is able to succor them, is most openhanded, and intelligent in the hunt. He who is lacking in these qualities is deserted by his followers in favor of one who possesses them, and is thus left only with his relatives and open to continual